

September 1

But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. Acts 9:15

IT is because we see Jesus to be the Fa-

PAUL A CHOSEN VESSEL

(Act 9:10-15 KJV) "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. (11) And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus... (13) Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: (14) And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. (15) But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:"

R5941 "ST. PAUL THE HERO—HIS LOYALTY, FAITHFULNESS, ENDURANCE—HE SUFFERED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...SURELY "A CHOSEN VESSEL!"
"My grace is sufficient for thee; for My power is made perfect in weakness."—
2 Corinthians 12:9.

WHAT a wonderful man was St. Paul! Doubtless the secret of his brilliancy lay in the fact that he so fully gave himself up to God—to do, not his own will, but the Father's will—that the Lord could use him as an Apostle, as a mouthpiece, as a servant, to a greater extent than He ever used any other man, perhaps. In this we are not implying that St. Paul was greater than his Master. Our Lord had only three and one-half years of service, while St. Paul had a long ministry—a long period of service for God and for the Church. Besides, it was not possible for the Master to go into the details of the Divine Plan; for even His devoted followers, including the Apostles, were natural men, who did not receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit until Pentecost. Hence we read that Jesus' teachings were chiefly in parables and dark sayings.—1 Cor. 2:14; Matt. 13:10-17.

On one occasion the Master declared to His disciples, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth;...and will show you things to come." (John 16:12,13.) There were no such limitations on St. Paul and the other Apostles. Their epistles were addressed to the saints of God in various quarters, to whom they wrote freely upon every feature of the great subject—the Divine Plan of Salvation. Some of their writings were along lines that they declared were suitable for "babes" in Christ, and others were "strong meat"—the deeper things of the Divine Plan. (Hebrews 5:13,14; 1 Peter 2:1-3.) But they wrote only to the spirit-begotten, not to the worldly...

THE SECRET OF HIS SUCCESS

...The secret of the Apostle's endurance of so great privations—scourgings, imprisonments, buffetings of various kinds—is presented to us in the words of our Golden Text. The Lord's grace was sufficient. The Lord's power was made perfect in his weakness...

ther's choice that we unite ourselves to Him; because we see the Father's character manifested in Him that we leave all to follow Him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the divine plan and service, it should be

The same is true with every follower of the Lord since His day. The Master truly said to His followers, "Without Me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5.) It is the Divine Power which operates through our Lord Jesus, through the Word of Truth, through the followers of Jesus; and this Power can operate in the weakest members of the Body of Christ as well as in the strongest."

R2220 "PAUL'S HEART REVEALED... ACTS 20:22-35 -- "*Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" -- Acts 20:35.

PERHAPS no other words give us a clearer insight into the heart of the Apostle Paul than his address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus. They show us what were the moving impulses of his active life. He sought not for ease or fame or worldly pleasure. He was thoroughly imbued with his Master's holy spirit which delighted in honoring God and doing good to all, regardless of earthly reward, persecutions, insults, slander and misrepresentations."

PROPER CHOSING OF SERVANTS TODAY

F273 "Each separate *Ecclesia*...is to consider the Lord as *its* Head, and to consider the twelve apostles as the twelve stars, bright ones, teachers, whom the Lord specially held in his hand and controlled--using them as his mouthpieces for the instruction of his Church in every place, in every gathering, throughout the entire age.

Each congregation or *Ecclesia* -- even if composed of only two or three -- is to seek to recognize the will of the Head in respect to all of its affairs...

Looking thus to the Lord and recognizing the character of the servants he would use--humble, zealous, well reported of, clear in the Truth, giving evidence of having the anointing and the unction of the Spirit -- they would be prepared to expect such general ministries to the needs of the whole Church, and to seek a share in the general blessing and dispensation of the "meat in due season" promised us by the Master...

All the members of the body united to the Head are to have confidence and to look for the fulfilment of his promises; but, nevertheless, are to "try the spirits"--to test the doctrines from whomsoever they emanate... They are not listening for the voice of man, but for the voice of the Chief Shepherd; that they feast upon his words and love them--love to masticate them and to digest them. Such members of the body grow stronger and more rapidly in the Lord and in the power of his might than do others, because more attentive to the Lord's leading and instruction."

THE LORD ONLY SPOKE FATHER'S WORDS

(John 8:28 KJV) "Then said Jesus unto them... I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

simply upon this ground--not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader being of His appointment. Z.'03-206R3218:6

SERVANTS LIKEWISE RESPONSIBLE

(Jas 3:1 ASV) "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment."

F258 "It is a responsible thing to undertake to any extent to be the mouthpiece of God--to make sure that not a word is uttered which would misrepresent the divine character and plan, and thus dishonor God as well as do injury to those who might hear."

(2 Tim 4:3-4 KJV) "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; {4} And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

R1475 "It is an increasingly popular idea among religious journalists that such a journal should be a medium merely for the expression of all shades of human opinion upon all matters of divine revelation, and that each individual should abstract from them all what he conceives to be true, and reject the rest. But this is precisely what the readers, and often the editors, too, of such journals are unable to do, and the general confusion is only increased unto greater blindness and denser darkness, and thus the purpose of the adversary is accomplished.

There is a deep responsibility to God which every man assumes, whether he realizes it or not, when he becomes a public teacher. "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall *teach* men so, he shall be called *the least* in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever *shall do* and *teach* them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."-- Matt. 5:19

No table is fit for the household of faith to be summoned to that has not been spread by careful hands, fully submitted and obedient to the great Head of the house, whose directions are found in his Word."

(1 Pet 4:10-11 KJV) "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. {11} If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

R1188 "Let every member of the body be solicitous for his influence over every other member, taking heed that he place no stumbling block in his brother's way, but that in all things his course shall prove helpful to the saints. 'If any man speak,' says the Apostle, 'let him speak as the oracles of God.' If we would teach the truth, let us first prove it and make sure that it is truth, and not present crude ideas and human imaginations to stumble the weaker brother. And likewise in dispensing religious reading matter, we should be similarly careful to speak by this agency

also as the oracles of God. No tract or book or paper should be handed to another, which we cannot endorse. Thus we may speak as the oracles of God and minister of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever."

INDORSING SERVANTS

(1 Tim 5:22 KJV) "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."

(1Ti 5:22 Weymouth 1912) "Do not ordain any one hastily; and do not be a partaker in the sins of others; keep yourself pure."

F285 "Here the Apostle intimates that a laying on of Timothy's hands upon a fellow-laborer in the vineyard would signify his approval, or indorsement: so that if the man turned out poorly in any respect, Timothy would share in his demerit. He must, so far as possible, make sure that he did not give his influence to introduce one who would do injury to the Lord's sheep, either morally or doctrinally."

R4360 "As the priests laid their hands upon the animals which were to represent them in sacrifice, so the Church laid their hands upon those who were to represent them in the service of the Truth."

(Act 14:23 Weymouth 1912) "And in every Church, after prayer and fasting, they selected Elders by show of hands, and com-

mended them to the Lord on whom their faith rested."

R5982 "Let us remember that a correct understanding of the Lord's Word is not enjoyed by all the educated and talented, but comes to those who are of a meek and teachable heart, who study the Lord's Word and who live it and absorb its spirit. Thus we have illustrated to us the Divine declaration, "Not by might [greatness], nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." -- "Zechariah 4:6".

The lesson to us is that no matter how great, no matter how able any brother or sister may be, this will not make such fit to be a leader of the Lord's people unless he have additionally the all-important items--first, a knowledge of the Lord's Word; and second, the possession of a good degree of the spirit of Truth--one who always dare be trusted as an ambassador of the Lord. None others should be recognized as teachers or leaders amongst the Lord's people."

R5968 "THE EPISTLE OF CHRIST... *"Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, ministered [written] by us; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart."*--2 Cor. 3:3...

Wherever there is a true Christian--not merely spirit-begotten, but spirit-developed in the character-likeness of the Savior in meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness and love--we have the evidence of the power of God at work in him to will and to do His good-pleasure...

R3613 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

NOT HOLDING THE HEAD

--COLOSSIANS 2:18--

THE APOSTLE warns us all against a wrong attitude which at all times has more or less threatened the body of Christ, in its larger gatherings as well as in its little handfuls;--he warns us against the danger of looking too much to ourselves or to other men in the Church and not enough toward the Lord, who is indeed "the Head of the Church, which is his body." Some members he represents as taking a head position, forgetful of the fact that "one is the Head of the Church, even Christ," and inclined in consequence of this forgetfulness to think too highly of themselves, to imagine that the whole weight and importance of the Lord's cause devolves upon them, and to assume too much leadership.

The Apostle warns other less prominent members of the Church against a recognition and support of such a wrong position, assuring them that their condescension is extreme, prejudicial to themselves and to the interests they would serve; that the angels, that is the messengers, the representatives of the Church (Rev. 1:20; 2:1) are not to be worshipped, though they are to be highly esteemed in proportion to their faithfulness, good works and humility. He warns other members that such a humiliation as would ignore themselves entirely and cast all the weight and responsibility and influence upon these angels or elders would be improper, would indicate an unfaithfulness to Christ and a failure to rightly appreciate his arrangements.

DANGERS IN OPPOSITE EXTREMES

Thus, reproofing two classes because of taking opposite extremes, the Apostle proceeds to explain that the difficulty with both parties is a failure to hold the Head in proper esteem--Christ, the only true Head of the Church. Whether by exalting ourselves, usurping our Lord's place in the Church, and ignoring his words and arrangements and being puffed up as his servants, or whether on the other hand quietly submitting to such things and doing reverence to those who usurp the Lord's place in his body, in either case the difficulty is the same--a failure to rightly recognize the true Head.

If we accept the fact that Christ is the Head of the Church, let us rest every argument on that basis; let us not feel for a moment that everything will go to pieces unless we steady the ark--that we are main spokes in the divine program in any little quarter of Zion.

Let us not forget that we shall not know how to write in the hearts of others what we have not already had written in our own hearts. Hence the propriety of great caution in the choosing of Elders -- to find those who already have the writing of the Lord in their hearts, and who therefore will be competent assistants, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, for the writing of the Lord's character-likeness in the hearts of the younger brethren."

F247 "It seems less remarkable that "goats" and goat-like sheep in the Lord's flock should aspire to leadership, than that the true sheep who recognize the Master's voice, who know his Spirit and who are seeking to do his will, should with docility permit such goats or goat-like sheep to take the leadership amongst them. It is well that we follow peace with all men; but where we disregard the Word and Spirit of the Lord for the sake of peace it will be sure to result injuriously to a greater or less extent. It is well that all should have the docile, sheep-like nature; but it is necessary also that the sheep have *character*, else they cannot be overcomers; and if they have character they should remember the Chief Shepherd's words, "My sheep hear my voice [obey it]...and they follow me," "a *stranger* will they not follow...for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:5,27) It is the duty, therefore, of every sheep to take special notice of the message and the manner of every brother before they aid in putting him forward as an overseer, either local or general."

(1 Chron. 13:10.) All such self-conceited ideas are traitorous as respects the Captain of our Salvation, for he has told us--and we believe his word--"Without me ye can do nothing." Every member of the body of Christ, whom the Lord has in any sense of the word set in the Church to serve his cause, should realize that he is not at all essential to the development of the divine plan, that it is favor pure and simple that he has been granted a share in connection with it, that his blessings day by day more than compensate any little service and sacrifice he may be able to render. So far from feeling heady he should feel humbled by the thought that he is permitted to have any part in the great plan of God as a servant amongst his brethren, and he should realize distinctly that, so surely as the Lord is the Head of his Church, any who cease to occupy positions of trust in a humble manner will be debased, will lose the privileges and opportunities, perhaps with injury to themselves and to others.

Those humble brothers and sisters who quietly permit a brother to exalt himself amongst them and to speak of the gathering, large or small, as "my Church," "my followers," etc., are not only doing the brother an injury and encouraging him in a wrong course, but they are disloyal to the real Head of the Church. He who submits to such conditions and language demonstrates that he does not properly appreciate "the liberty wherewith Christ makes free"--demonstrates either that he is but a "babe in Christ" or that he has gone to sleep as respects a proper watchfulness for the honor of the Church and of the Head of the Church. It matters not that such things can be explained away as not having meant anything serious. The fact is that such language and claims indicate that something serious has already taken place, for no truly humble Elder of the Church of Christ, loyal to the Head, would think of speaking of himself as instead of the Head of the Church, nor think of speaking of the Lord's people as his Church.

Such public offenses should be publicly apologized for, otherwise such leaders should be relegated to the back seats. No matter if they had all the oratory imaginable, no matter if none of the others had any talent for public service. The poorest and weakest and most insignificant member of the body is, in the Lord's estimation, better qualified to teach than is one who vaunteth and puffeth up himself

and affects to take in the Church the position of the Head. Mark the Apostle's words, "Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God."--Col. 2:19.

SELF FIRST, GOD SECOND

In 2 Timothy 2:3 the Apostle assures us that, In the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents [and higher authority in general], unthankful, unholy...traducers, heady, high-minded...having a form of godliness, but ignoring the power thereof.

This picture certainly fits well to our day throughout nominal Christendom, and it is not strange therefore that something of the same general spirit at times seeks to invade the camp of the saints--the little companies of the consecrated who are striving to be overcomers of the world and its spirit. The fact that the Apostle writes thus forcefully on this question does not prove any lack of sympathy on his part, and assuredly our reference to his words indicate no lack of sympathy on our part. But the trouble is a grievous one and especially injurious to the brethren who may yield to such headiness: nothing is surer to sap spiritual vitality and to lead us into darkness, both doctrinal and spiritual.

On the contrary the Apostle James warns us against this danger which besets the more talented of the Lord's people. He writes, Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that a man shall receive the stronger testings. (Jas. 3:1.) It is because of our love for the brethren, because of our high esteem for them, and because we appreciate their services and desire that they may be continued in the service of the Lord, not only now but also in the everlasting future, that we feel it necessary to press this point, not personally, not individually, but generally.

We urge upon all whom the Lord hath set in the body, either in a humble position or in a conspicuous place, that the Apostle's words be remembered--that as our Lord humbled himself and was subsequently exalted, it demonstrates a principle at work in the Father's program under which all of his Royal Priesthood must humble themselves if they would in due time be exalted; also the Apostle's concluding argument is, "Humble yourselves, therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Now is not the proper time for exaltation; to elevate ourselves or others under present conditions is to incur the greater danger of a fall. Hence all who are earnest and of humble heart should both watch and pray lest they enter into temptation along this line, which from the very beginning of the Gospel age has been the most serious stumbling block in the pathway of this class. We remember that it

was amongst the apostles themselves that the argument took place as to which would be greatest in the Kingdom. Let us also remember our Lord's words of reproof to them, "Except ye humble yourselves and become as little children ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom."

ONLY THE HUMBLE ARE SAFE

Thus our Lord marks humility as one of the prime essentials of a place in the Kingdom. And we can see the importance, the reason for this. To exalt to the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom and divine nature one who had not thoroughly demonstrated his humility of spirit would be to place him in a position where he might become another Satan, another adversary, who in time under one delusion or another might wish to divide the divine honors even beyond the munificence of our heavenly Father's provision for all those who are truly his consecrated ones.

It will not be very long, dear brethren--let us have patience. Let us have faith, too, not be doubters. Much of the endeavor to grasp and wield authority in the Church is at first undertaken with the best of intentions, with the desire to do and be in the highest interests of the Church. In such cases faith is not strong enough to realize how unnecessary we are to the divine plan and how able the Lord is to overrule every incident and circumstance according to the divine will. More faith in the Lord's power to regulate the affairs of the Church will counteract largely the efforts of some of his people to run the Church's interests along lines of their own wisdom and ability. Let us remember that he is able, he is willing, to work all things according to the counsel of his own will. Let us remember that our highest place is lying low, that the greatest mastery is self-mastery, and that whatever success we might have in usurping the place and authority of our Lord and his Word would undoubtedly react unfavorably to us in the end. Hence in self-preservation as well as in the interest of the Church and in honor of the Lord, we need to keep self under. Let us remember the words of the poet and apply them daily:

"O! to be nothing, nothing,
Painful the humbling may be;
Yet low in the dust I'd lay me
That the world my Savior might see.
Rather be nothing, nothing--
To him let their voices be raised;
He is the fountain of blessing,
Yes, worthy is he to be praised."

Let us keep ever in memory the Apostle's example and words: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. 4:5.

R3218 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

CHOOSING A KING

--1 SAM. 10:17-27.--JULY 12.--

Golden Text:--"The Lord is our king; he will save us."--Isa. 33:22.

ALTHOUGH the people of Israel were self-willed in the matter of desiring a king like the nations about them, it is to their credit that they desired the Lord, through his prophet Samuel, to make the selection of the one who should fill the office. Undoubtedly, however, men of the various tribes were ambitious for the office. To suppose otherwise would be to disregard our knowledge of and experience with human nature. If the petty offices of ward and town politics are eagerly sought and almost fought for at the primaries and polls today, what wire pulling might we not expect if it were determined that a king should be chosen? We fear that a contrast between the people of Christendom and the Israelites on this subject would result unfavorably to the former. In all the countries constituting "Christendom" how few there are who, when choosing their officers, give any consideration whatever to the Lord's choice for the position! Even when we think of the choice of ministers in the denominations of the Church nominal, we find the contrast rather unfavorable; for the choice of a bishop or minister is indeed, apparently, very rarely referred to the Lord exclusively, with the desire to have his will and his choice, and none other, selected.

Guided by the Lord, Saul, a young man from an influential family, of the tribe of Benjamin, was anointed to be king. He was brought to the prophet for the anointing by a peculiar train of circumstances. His father owned a valuable herd of asses which strayed away, and Saul, after seeking them in vain, appealed to the prophet for assistance in locating them, and thus he showed his confidence in God, and in Samuel as his prophet. Nothing is recorded respecting the young man's interest in religious matters up to this time; but he is mentioned favorably as a "goodly" young man. After his anointing he kept the matter secret with becoming modesty, waiting for the Lord's plan to develop more fully and to bring him ultimately into

prominence before the nation. It is quite probable that this secretive-ness was at the instigation of Samuel.

In due time Samuel sent word to the Elders of Israel to meet him at Mizpeh (watch-tower), and upon their arrival the matters of this lesson followed. Samuel rehearsed to them the Lord's favor as it had been with them during the previous centuries, beginning with their miraculous deliverance from Egypt. He impressed upon them the fact that all of the Lord's care over them had been for their good; that no king could have done them better service than their great King; and that no government could have been more to their happiness than that they had enjoyed and which they were now rejecting in their request for a king, which petition the Lord had determined to grant. In harmony with this they had assembled--not all the people, but representatives from all the tribes and from the various families of each tribe. Ignoring the anointing of Saul already accomplished, Samuel proceeded to cast lots, that the people might thus know that the choice to be made was the Lord's choice and not Samuel's. It was the custom at that time to have the High Priest's ephod in use on such occasions, and a pocket in the ephod was made the receptacle for slips of paper, or sometimes for the precious stones representing the different tribes and families. First, a choice was made amongst the tribes to determine in which one would be found the man whom the Lord had chosen to become their king. Doubtless the princes of the tribe of Ephraim remembered the good promises prophetically given by Jacob respecting them, and probably thought that the Lord's choice would fall upon their tribe. The princes of Manasseh may also have remembered the good promises respecting their tribe, and may not have been without hope respecting the lot. The men of Judah, unquestionably, would call to mind the promise that a law-giver should come from Judah, and would have strong hopes re-

specting the result of the lot. But when the lot was cast, when the hand pulled forth from the ephod pocket the stone representing the tribe of Benjamin, the matter was decided, and in general the people bowed to the Lord's decision. Next, the leading families, or clans, of the tribe of Benjamin were representatively placed in the ephod, and the hand drew forth as the Lord's choice the name representing the family of Matri; and again, the various members of the family of Matri were representatively placed in the ephod bag, and the hand drew forth the name of Saul, the son of Kish. Thus was publicly demonstrated the Lord's choice, which the prophet and Saul himself already knew. We can imagine the stir and commotion to find the man thus chosen to be the king, respecting whom but few of the people seemed to have the slightest knowledge. They sought him everywhere, but could not find him, and again the inspired oracle was sought to indicate whether he would be found, and where. The Lord's answer was that he had hidden himself amongst the stuff-- the baggage which, as was the custom, was probably piled up, surrounding the camp as a barricade. Saul evidently had full confidence in the Lord's foreknowledge and that the lots drawn would confirm the prophet's declaration to him and his anointing. The modesty which led him to hide and, to some extent, to shrink from the honor to be conferred, is very gratifying to all right-minded people. Would that we could see more of this modesty amongst the chief ones of this world and also amongst the chief ones of nominal spiritual Israel! We should each mark the beauty of such humble-mindedness, and seek to cultivate the same quality in our own hearts and lives-- however different this may make us from the majority of the world.

When Saul stood amongst the people he was head and shoulders above them, probably seven feet tall. His natural qualities would thus appeal strongly to the people of his time, who even in picturing their rulers represented them as many times larger than the average man. Then Samuel introduced him, saying, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" and the responsive shout of the people was, "God save the king!" or literally, Lord, let the king live--the usual greeting to their kings.

We are reminded of the fact that God is now about to establish a Kingdom in the world and is choosing a King. The Millennial kingdom might not be necessary in the form in which it will be introduced, were the people in the right attitude of heart to desire and to obey the divine will; but they prefer to have the laws of righteousness enforced rather than voluntarily to submit themselves to the Lord. In due time they shall have a king, Immanuel--like Saul in some respects, but very unlike him in others. The Lord is now selecting this King Immanuel. He is passing by the great tribes, the prominent people, and choosing the little and the humble--not many great, not many wise, not many learned has God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26-28.) The selection is going on in the sight of all the people. They will be witnesses, when all the steps of the election of God have been taken, that the choice is the Lord's without peradventure; and yet the Lord foreknew his choice in advance of this public selection. He foreknew Jesus as the Head of the Church, the Head of the great King; he anointed him in advance "with the oil of gladness above his fellows," to be King; yet, so far as the people in general are concerned, they know not the Lord's anointed--the matter is kept secret for a time. The members of the body of Christ must all be like the Head. As the Apostle declares, God has predestinated that every one who shall become a member of that body shall be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29.) By and by, when the outward election is complete, when the world shall come properly to feel its need for a great King, search will be made to find the Lord's Anointed, and he will be found at his second advent. "The desire of all nations shall come"; the Christ of God will be the desired one of all nations. (The name Saul, singularly enough, signifies Desired.) As the men of Israel gave a shout when they recognized Saul's stateliness, so the world of mankind will shout for joy when they shall realize the presence of the Christ of God, the great King, their deliverer from Satan, from misrule, from every enemy--the Lord who "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet--the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."^[1] Not only shall it be true that the Lord's Anointed One shall be head and shoulders above all others, "the chiefest amongst ten thousand, the one altogether lovely," but it should also be true to a considerable extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the body of Christ in the present life--before he is proclaimed King of the whole world--should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the

affairs of men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, should see their largeness of heart, their moral heights--should discern in them the spirit of a sound mind.

The record is that a band of Israelites, a bodyguard, at once attached themselves to Saul--men "whose hearts God had touched." They were touched with the realization that the Lord had made this choice, and with the desire to be in accord with the Lord and to support the divine will as it concerned the chosen one, and to cooperate therewith. This is a proper lesson to all of the Lord's people now.^[2] It is because we see Jesus to be the Father's choice that we unite ourselves to him; because we see the Father's character manifested in him that we leave all to follow him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the divine plan and service, it should be simply upon this ground--not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader being of his appointment. Thus our loyalty will always be to God and not to men. Nevertheless, we shall find ourselves co-laboring in a manner most useful and most helpful in the Lord's service; coworkers with God and coworkers with all who are his servants under his appointments. So, doubtless, it will be in the future when the great King complete has taken the reins of government; the best of mankind will flock to him, anxious to know and to do his will and to be in full accord with him as the representative of the heavenly Father and his Kingdom.

The expression "Sons of Belial" signifies children of the Devil, or wicked persons--persons out of harmony with God and not submissive to his arrangements and selections. There are also such in the present time, who are speaking evil directly or indirectly of such members of the body of Christ as they have contact with; being out of sympathy with the Lord they are out of sympathy with all of his arrangements. Their influence either in the nominal church or out of it is, therefore, against the true interests of the Lord's cause. There will be such in the Millennial age when the Kingdom shall have been established, and of these the Lord speaks in the parable, "Those who would not have me to reign over them." Again they are mentioned by the Apostle (Acts 3:23) saying, "It shall come to pass that the soul who will not obey that prophet shall be cut off from amongst the people." However, we may be sure that they will not be cut off until they have had a full exhibition of the divine power and mercy;--only such as resist after all these opportunities and privileges will be counted worthy of the Second Death.

Very shortly after Saul's appointment to the kingdom he had opportunity to show his ability in delivering the people, for a neighboring king advanced upon Israel with a considerable army. Saul gathered his troops from the various tribes, to the number of 330,000 men, and totally routed Nahash and his army of the Ammonites. This victory cemented the hearts of the people of Israel to their king, and they in their loyalty demanded the execution of the sons of Belial who had spoken against him; but the nobility of King Saul is shown in his refusal to accede to this suggestion, and his saying, "There shall not a man be put to death today." So when the power of the glorious King of the Millennial age shall be manifested in the routing of the enemies of righteousness, the general sentiment of the world toward him will be loyalty, and then he will have an opportunity of showing his mercy and forbearance toward those who during the darkness of the present time have spoken evil of him and sought to oppose his Kingdom. The declaration shall then go forth that none shall die the Second Death on account of Adamic weaknesses, blindness and insubordination; --that none shall die the Second Death except as the result of personal and wilful sin after having been brought to a knowledge of the truth.

Our Golden Text is one the sentiments of which should be deeply impressed upon the hearts of all the Lord's people. The world may cry out, saying, "We have no king but Caesar," but the Lord's people, the Israelites indeed, will feel the reverse of this,--that "the Lord is our king." In harmony with his command, we will honor earthly kings and obey earthly laws in every particular in which they do not conflict with the divine law; but, nevertheless, above earthly kings, our esteem, homage and obedience must be to him whom the Lord hath appointed, King Immanuel. If he be enthroned in our hearts it will be comparatively easy for us to be loyal to him in our conduct and in our words, wherever we may be. If we deny him, he will also deny us; but if we confess him he will also confess us before the Father and the holy angels--he will save us and ultimately through us as his Church, his body, he will, according to the original promise, bless all the families of the earth which we, with him, will then inherit.-- Gal. 3:29.

[1] Aug. 30 Manna, Mat. 5:16

[2] Sep. 1 Manna, Acts 9:15